

In the Claims:

Please cancel claim 7 without prejudice.

1. (canceled)

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, ~~wherein said presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system further comprises~~further comprising:

subsequently presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user hovering a cursor over said representation of said remote computer system user; and

removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, ~~wherein said presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system further comprises~~further comprising:

subsequently presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user selecting said representation of said remote computer system user; and

removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.

4. (currently amended) A computer implemented method of providing, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system having at least one processor and a computer readable memory, a local user of said local computer system~~an instant messaging system~~ with updated status information regarding at least one remote user, comprising:

~~obtaining, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system,~~ from an associated awareness server application process executing on a server computer system, an online status of said remote computer system user;

~~presenting, by said awareness client application process,~~ a representation of said remote computer system user, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user includes an ~~indication of said online status~~ icon associated with ~~of~~ said remote computer system user;

~~obtaining, by said awareness client application process on said local computer system,~~ an updated status message associated with said remote computer system user, wherein said updated status message includes personal detail information and activity information regarding said remote computer system user other than said online status of said remote computer system user;
and

~~modifying said indication of~~ said online status icon associated with ~~of~~ said remote computer system user to include an additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing, wherein said modifying does not present said updated status message, wherein said online status icon of said

remote computer system user includes a graphical representation of whether said remote computer system user is currently available for an instant messaging communication session, and wherein said modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing leaves said graphical representation of whether said remote computer system is currently available for an instant messaging communication session unmodified;

~~—— presenting said updated status message to a local user of said local computer system; and~~
~~—— removing said indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.~~

5. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is maintained by said awareness client application process on said local computer system.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is an awareness object within a display window associated with an application process on said local computer system other than said awareness client application process.

7. (cancelled)

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising presenting said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing for a predetermined time after said obtaining said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user by starting a timer in response to said modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing and removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing in response to expiration of said timer.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to indicate whether an additional visual indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system user is available for viewing is provided to other users.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising:

presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to specify one or more other users ~~to~~with which an additional visual indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system is available for viewing may be presented.

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

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25. (canceled)

26. (canceled)

27. (canceled)

28. (canceled)

29. (canceled)

30. (canceled)

31. (canceled)

32. (canceled)

Please add the following new claims:

33. (new) A system for providing, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system having at least one processor and a computer readable memory, a local user of said local computer system with updated status information regarding at least one remote user, said client application process comprising:

program code for obtaining, from an associated awareness server application process executing on a server computer system, an online status of said remote computer system user;

program code for presenting a representation of said remote computer system user, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user includes an online status icon associated with said remote computer system user;

program code for obtaining an updated status message associated with said remote computer system user, wherein said updated status message includes personal detail information and activity information regarding said remote computer system user other than said online status of said remote computer system user; and

program code for modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include an additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing, wherein said modifying does not present said updated status message, wherein said online status icon of said remote computer system user includes a graphical representation of whether said remote computer system user is currently available for an instant messaging communication session, and wherein said modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing leaves said graphical representation of whether

said remote computer system is currently available for an instant messaging communication session unmodified.

34. (new) The system of claim 33, further comprising:

program code for subsequently presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user hovering a cursor over said representation of said remote computer system user; and

program code for removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.

35. (new) The system of claim 33, further comprising:

program code for subsequently presenting said updated status message to said local user of said local computer system in response to said local user selecting said representation of said remote computer system user; and

program code for removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing responsive to said presenting of said updated status message.

36. (new) The system of claim 33, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is maintained by said awareness client application process on said local computer system.

37. (new) The system of claim 33, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user is an awareness object within a display window associated with an application process on said local computer system other than said awareness client application process.

38. (new) The system of claim 33, further comprising program code for presenting said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing for a predetermined time after said obtaining said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user by starting a timer in response to said modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing and removing said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing in response to expiration of said timer.

39. (new) The system of claim 33, further comprising:

program code for presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to indicate whether an additional visual indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system user is available for viewing is provided to other users.

40. (new) The system of claim 33, further comprising:

program code for presenting an interface to said user of said local computer system, wherein said interface enables said user of said local computer system to specify one or more

other users to which an additional visual indication that an updated status message associated with said user of said local computer system is available for viewing may be presented.

41. (new) A computer program product including a computer readable memory having program code stored thereon for providing, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system having at least one processor and a computer readable memory, a local user of said local computer system with updated status information regarding at least one remote user, said program code comprising:

program code for obtaining, from an associated awareness server application process executing on a server computer system, an online status of said remote computer system user;

program code for presenting a representation of said remote computer system user, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user includes an online status icon associated with said remote computer system user;

program code for obtaining an updated status message associated with said remote computer system user, wherein said updated status message includes personal detail information and activity information regarding said remote computer system user other than said online status of said remote computer system user; and

program code for modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include an additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing, wherein said modifying does not present said updated status message, wherein said online status icon of said remote computer system user includes a graphical representation of whether said remote computer system user is currently available for an instant messaging communication session, and wherein said modifying

said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing leaves said graphical representation of whether said remote computer system is currently available for an instant messaging communication session unmodified.

42. (new) A system for providing, by an awareness client application process executing on a local computer system having at least one processor and a computer readable memory, a local user of said local computer system with updated status information regarding at least one remote user, said client application process comprising:

means for obtaining, from an associated awareness server application process executing on a server computer system, an online status of said remote computer system user;

means for presenting a representation of said remote computer system user, wherein said representation of said remote computer system user includes an online status icon associated with said remote computer system user;

means for obtaining an updated status message associated with said remote computer system user, wherein said updated status message includes personal detail information and activity information regarding said remote computer system user other than said online status of said remote computer system user; and

means for modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include an additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing, wherein said modifying does not present said updated status message, wherein said online status icon of said remote computer

system user includes a graphical representation of whether said remote computer system user is currently available for an instant messaging communication session, and wherein said modifying said online status icon associated with said remote computer system user to include said additional visual indication that said updated status message associated with said remote computer system user is available for viewing leaves said graphical representation of whether said remote computer system is currently available for an instant messaging communication session unmodified.